



## Infant Care Tips: Six Months

### Baby can:

- Reach for objects and hold them.
- Roll over and sit up alone (or soon will).
- Bring feet to mouth.
- Bounce and scoot around.
- Turn to voice when called.
- Cry when left alone in the room.
- Recognize strangers.

### Safety

- Do not leave your baby alone while out of the crib or playpen, especially around water.
- Keep all small objects – buttons, pins, coins, peanuts – and plastic wrappers or bags out of reach.
- Do not hold your baby while you smoke cigarettes, drink hot liquids, or cook. A sudden movement may cause you to burn your baby.
- Keep crib rails locked at highest setting so your baby will not fall out when he learns to pull up. Keep the crib away from windows and use cordless window coverings to avoid baby strangling in blind cords.
- Baby should sleep alone in his own crib not in the “big bed” with other children or adults.
- In the kitchen and bathroom, remove all detergents, cleaners, solvents and poisonous liquids kept under the sink. Put them up high, get rid of them or put safety locks on cabinets.
- Lock medicines in a cabinet.
- Keep Carolina Poison Center number (1-800-222-1222) beside your phone or enter it in your mobile phone.
- Do not allow your baby to put dirt in his mouth. Regularly clean toys that baby puts in his mouth.
- Use your child’s safety seat for every car trip-short or long! He should still be rear facing. Never leave your child unattended in the car.
- Do not allow baby to play with items that contain batteries, especially small coin-sized batteries. Batteries can both choke your baby and burn his insides.

### Feeding

Foods for babies are:

- Breast milk, formula (30-38 ounces daily). May have 2-4 ounces daily of juice or water (from a cup only).
- Infant cereal (that comes in the box, not from a jar). Plain without fruit added.
- Strained vegetables and fruits.
- Avoid using jarred “dinners” and desserts.

Fruits will give baby a new eating experience and provide vitamins, too. Mild flavored fruits are best to start with, like applesauce, pears, bananas and peaches. You can also mash fresh ripe fruits such as bananas and feed this to baby. **Do not** use fruit desserts or mixed fruits. **Do not** add sugar or honey.

Start with one fruit at a time. Wait at least three to four days before starting a new fruit. Then, if baby is allergic to any fruit or vegetable you can easily tell which one it is. Begin with one teaspoon and gradually increase to three tablespoons daily.

Feeding time will be messy! Don't scold or make baby unhappy about this – baby is learning.

- Add meats and egg yolks when baby is 8 months old.
- Begin offering a cup instead of a bottle.
- Remember your baby's 6 month nutrition assessment at WIC.

**Note:** If your baby is having difficulty eating or is spitting up, has a rash, or has constant diarrhea, these can be signs of stomach sensitivity or allergic reaction. Please consult your health care provider.

### **Bowels**

If your baby eats at regular times, his bowels may move at regular times. Your baby's bladder is getting bigger and can hold more, so he wets more at a time but not as often. Changing diapers is often a hassle because the baby is so active. Speed always helps, but sometimes a toy or extra talking during the process will help.

### **Dental Care**

Baby teeth will start to come in as early as 6 months. As baby's teeth begin to erupt, he may be irritable and restless. A cool teething ring or clean washcloth to chew on may make sore gums feel better. Over-the-counter products for teething pain are not recommended by doctors.

### **Immunizations**

Your child will receive another series of immunizations this month. Check with your child's health care provider regarding the influenza (flu) vaccine. Visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) for a complete immunization schedule.

### **Sleeping**

When tired, your baby may fall asleep sitting up, but cry when laid down. A morning or afternoon nap is generally needed.

Remember: back to sleep, tummy to play.

### **Play**

Your baby works and plays all day. He may like to bounce, swing, try to stand, pick up, bang and drop objects – rattles, blocks, metal cups and spoons, balls, pans and lids.

### **Symptoms of illness**

Your baby won't be able to tell you when he feels bad. Watch for signs of illness such as fever, poor appetite, being less active, more fussy. Have a digital thermometer at home and learn how to take your baby's temperature.

For more information contact the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Division at 336-641-7777 or [www.myguilford.com](http://www.myguilford.com)